

RELEASE CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONER REGIS IGLESIAS RAMIREZ

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the two-year anniversary of the brutal crackdown on political opposition by the Cuban regime. In partial commemoration of this ignoble milestone, my dear friend and colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and I have launched an "adopt a political prisoner" initiative to help focus the spotlight of international attention on those suffering in Cuban jails because of their inextinguishable faith in the power of democratic liberty.

I rise today to inform my colleagues that I stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Cuban political prisoner Regis Iglesias Ramirez.

Mr. Speaker, as an outspoken advocate of human rights in Cuba, Mr. Iglesias is a member of the Coordinating Board for the Christian Liberation Movement. He is also a principal organizer of the Varela Project, a grassroots, civic movement that petitions the Cuban government to allow its citizens to exercise their fundamental human rights. To date, this project has collected and presented over 25,000 signatures to the proper Cuban authorities. Because of his admirable efforts and political activism, Mr. Iglesias was arrested on March 20, 2003, during a wave of repression which was directed against the peaceful Cuban opposition. After weeks of interrogations and psychological torture, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison for the alleged crime of "acts against the independence or territorial integrity of the state"—a common charge that dictatorial states have levied against democracy and human rights advocates for far too long.

Mr. Iglesias was born in Havana on September 18, 1969. He loves to read classical literature and admires leaders of peaceful yet forceful advocacy such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. He is an educated, hard-working man who lives with passion—a passion to live in a democracy where basic civil and political liberties are respected. It is because of his uncompromising commitment to fight for these democratic freedoms that Castro's regime stripped him of his liberty.

Mr. Speaker, the abuses against Regis Iglesias Ramirez are horrendous. He has been repeatedly imprisoned for promoting the very ideals that we hold self-evident, and for calling out to his neighbors and fellow citizens to join him in a cry for freedom from a cruel, totalitarian regime. As Members of Congress, we must take the lead to ensure that these atrocities are stopped. I call upon the Cuban government to release Mr. Iglesias and to end human rights abuse. Let freedom's influence be felt not only in the halls of Capitol Hill, but also in the prison cells of Havana.

FREEDOM FOR ANTUNEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about Jorge Luis Garcia

Perez, often known Antunez, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

My distinguished friend and colleague, Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, had a great idea for Members of Congress to "adopt" a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba. Today, I "adopt" an extraordinary leader of unlimited courage, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez (Antunez).

Antunez has been locked in the totalitarian gulag since 1990. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to 6 years in prison for "oral enemy propaganda." In May 1993, he was tried in a second sham trial, and sentenced to an additional 15 years to be served from that moment. In total, Antunez has been sentenced to 18 years in Castro's grotesque, inhuman gulag.

Despite being enslaved in the tyrant's gulag, Antunez has bravely carried out nonviolent activism in Cuban jails, writing reports on prison conditions and carrying out numerous protests and hunger strikes to demand more humane treatment for prisoners. He has never wavered in his commitment to human rights and democracy for the Cuban people. Antunez has never given in to the beatings, the punishment cells and the instruments of torture inflicted on him by the Castro regime. Antunez always rises up and calls out, demanding human rights and freedom for the people and the nation of Cuba.

After 15 years in the gulag, Antunez is still feared and relentlessly attacked by the dictatorship. According to the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004, "on July 6, family members of political prisoner Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, reported being beaten along with Garcia during a prison visit. Authorities handcuffed and beat Garcia and later punched his sister and kicked his girlfriend's 9 year old son after the visitors protested the harsh treatment."

No matter how intense the repression, no matter how horrifically brutal the consequences to him and his family, Antunez will not waiver in his conviction that Cuba should be and will be free. He is a symbol of dignity and heroic resistance to tyranny.

Mr. Speaker, this courageous man has been in Castro's gulag since 1990, for failing to keep silent about the nightmare that is the Castro regime. My Colleagues, Antunez is the face of the real Cuba. We must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Jorge Luis Garcia Perez and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO MARY LOU ZOGLIN

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honor a distinguished American and community leader, Mary Lou Zoglin who passed away last week.

Mary Lou Zoglin was committed to serving her community whether it was with non-profits or through community service. She was the executive director of Healthy Ventures, a consortium of schools and other agencies dedicated to the well-being of children. She later served on the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the Foothill-De Anza Community College Board. In the early 1990s,

Mary Lou turned her public service to the City of Mountain View where she joined the city's Planning Commission. In 1996, she was elected to the Mountain View city Council where she served for 8 years, and one term as Mayor.

During her tenure with the City Council, Mary Lou Zoglin focused her public service on ensuring that the community has a continuum of human services from the time children are in preschool to high school and then into adulthood. She worked tirelessly to see that all members of the community are served by the city, not just those who are the most vocal or economically advantaged. She was instrumental in the construction of San Antonio Place, an affordable housing project in Mountain View which broke ground last year. She also fought for the creation of child-care centers, for improvements to city parks and for resources for youth, including after school programs.

Beyond her dedication to public service, Mrs. Zoglin was committed to her family and an avid student of foreign languages and cultures. She earned her college degree from Radcliffe College where she studied Romance languages and later won a Fulbright scholarship to study in Brussels, Belgium. Upon her return, she met her husband in the early 1950s while they were both in New York. They moved to Los Altos in 1956 where they began their family. Her children, John, Katie and Bill, were raised in this close-knit community and she recently became a proud grandmother of twin grandchildren.

Despite her 5-year battle with cancer and her small frame, Mary Lou Zoglin was frequently described as a "powerhouse" and a "dynamo." She found true joy in working with people in the community and making their dreams a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this good and great woman for her lifetime of remarkable achievements and in extending to her family our deepest sympathy. Our community and our country have lost a true friend and an extraordinary leader.

CPL. CHARLES W. LINDBERG AND
THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IWO
JIMA

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima and pay tribute to a fellow Minnesotan and true America hero, Cpl. Charles W. Lindberg. In a manner that is so characteristic of our veterans, Cpl. Lindberg put his life in harm's way so that future generations may live in a world free of the oppressive forces of tyranny. On the morning of the fifth day of this historic battle, six courageous young Marines—Jim Michels, Hank Hansen, Louis Charlo, Boots Thomas, Harold Schrier, and Charles Lindberg—were able to climb atop the slopes of Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima, in the thick of intense enemy fire and destroy a Japanese outpost, marking the first plot of native Japanese soil captured by the Americans during World War II. It was here that these five brave soldiers planted the first

American flag on Iwo Jima. Later, this scene was recreated by the rising of a second American flag on Iwo Jima, forever to be remembered in our nation's history by Joe Rosenthal's Pulitzer Prize winning photograph and the famous statue in Arlington National Cemetery. Unfortunately, Cpl. Lindberg is the sole remaining survivor of this fearless group of initial Marines. However, as is the case with so many of our veterans, Cpl. Lindberg's dedication to our country did not end after the completion of his military service. Through his involvement in efforts to improve our country and the lives of soldiers, Cpl. Lindberg has and continues to be devoted to veterans, veterans' organizations, and his community. With much admiration, I salute this American patriot for his valiant spirit and actions on and off the battlefield.

HONORING THE NATIONAL BETA CLUB FOR ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BOB INGLIS

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the National Beta Club as it completes its celebration of its 75th anniversary. The organization was formed by the late Dr. John West Harris in 1934 in Spartanburg County, SC and is still headquartered there in the Fourth District of South Carolina.

Over the years, the National Beta Club has provided the catalyst for teenagers of good character to develop leadership skills and channel their energy into productive service to others. By maintaining its high standards and worthy goals and acting through its outstanding local chapters across the country, the organization has had a positive impact on the success and accomplishments of our great nation for the past seven decades.

The National Beta Club's celebration of its seventy-first anniversary is an occasion highly deserving of recognition. Therefore, please join me in honoring this organization and its efforts to lay the foundation for learning and leading early in the lives of the young people whose lives it impacts.

EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF, 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1268) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to passage of this bill.

There are large amounts of funding in this bill that I support for pressing commitments and to meet urgent national and international needs. For example, I absolutely support getting our troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere all that they need and deserve in order to protect themselves and carry out their very difficult and dangerous missions. I was among the first to speak out and support legislation in 2003, when it became apparent that Secretary Rumsfeld and his advisors had seriously underestimated the types of body armor, up-armored Humvees and other equipment that would be needed by our forces in Iraq. I have voted for the additional funding in prior measures to correct for these miscalculations, as a matter of the utmost urgency, and I will continue to do so.

Similarly, I support the additional funding in this bill for enhancing nuclear nonproliferation efforts to help prevent weapons of mass destruction from getting into the wrong hands. I also support the additional funds for tsunami relief. There is also another down payment in this bill toward improving homeland security efforts in the Coast Guard, FBI, and other front-line agencies, but we need to be doing much more in this regard.

However, on balance I must oppose this legislation.

I've talked to many executive branch officials, civilian and military, and the simple reality is that they cannot plan in a coherent fashion when they are forced to deal with the uncertainty over how much money they will get and when they will get it. This bill denies them the ability to plan and the result is that our servicemen and women in the field are put in greater jeopardy. This is not a bill to support our troops.

By way of illustration, I serve on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. A substantial portion of the annual intelligence budget is now funded through supplemental and/or so-called "emergency" appropriations. Both civilian and military intelligence officials have told me and my colleagues on the committee that this process wreaks havoc with their ability to plan and execute their assigned responsibilities. There is simply no excuse for this state of affairs.

We have soldiers in the field, and we know that we'll be continuing military operations against al Qaeda and its surrogates for the foreseeable future. We know that as long as we're in Iraq at our current force level, we'll be spending about \$7 billion a month for the effort. That's not unforeseen. We should not be funding these operations through emergency supplemental appropriations. It certainly appears that the only reason the Bush Administration continues to try to fund current operations through supplementals is to avoid any kind of substantive review of its budgetary and procurement policies. The entire Haliburton episode is a prime example of how dysfunctional this process has become, and it's also why we must force the administration to provide us with honest budgets and honest estimates on what current and future operations are likely to cost. In fact, the leadership here turned down a bipartisan amendment that would simply have formed a commission to look at the awarding and carrying out of Government contracts to conduct military and reconstruction activities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It has become painfully apparent that the path toward a free, democratic and fully reconstructed Iraq will be long and treacherous. If and when this bill is enacted, the cost for the war in Iraq and the ongoing military occupation of that country will exceed \$220 billion. In fact, the true costs of this effort are underestimated and masked, as evidenced by the fact that they are not accounted for in the new Fiscal Year 2006 budget that President Bush submitted to Congress last month. Some projections suggest that the cost will top \$300 billion before the end of this year. And as far as taking care of the wounds of war—physical and psychological—of our latest generation of veterans, neither this supplemental nor the administration's FY06 VA budget request come remotely close to meeting the expected need . . . undoubtedly one of the many reasons that most of the military services are falling short of their recruiting targets this year.

Rather than continue the status quo on an open-ended, costly basis and to vote ever-increasing amounts in "emergency spending," Congress must demand much greater transparency in the management and spending for ongoing U.S. military operations in Iraq. Even more important, we need a thorough policy review that will help bring internal stability and security throughout Iraq and create the conditions under which the long-suffering people of Iraq can regain full control of their own affairs and make rapid progress in rebuilding their war-torn nation in a new era of peace, security, and democratic self-government. This supplemental request does not achieve that, and I urge my colleagues to work with me to craft one that does.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 67 pertaining to H. Res. 101, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I was absent at a previously scheduled commitment and missed the recorded votes on Roll Call Number 82, the Obey Amendment to H. Con. Res. 95; Roll Call Number 83, the Hensarling Amendment to H. Con. Res. 95; and Roll Call Number 84, on H. Con. Res. 32, expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic.

Had I been present, I would have voted "No" on Roll Call Number 82; "No" on Roll Call Number 83; and "Yes" on Roll Call Number 84.